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ABSTRACT

This booklet begins with a rationale for a strategy for structuring reading activities in the English classroom in order to facilitate growth in reading ability and to accommodate students with varying initial levels of achievement. Specific suggestions are provided for prereading activities, the reading itself, and postreading activities. A bibliography related primarily to the theoretical rationale for the activities is included. (AA)

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Structuring Reading Activities

for English Classes

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CS 002 952

2

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Foreword

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system developed by the U.S. Office of Education and now sponsored by the National Institute of Education (NIE). It provides ready access to descriptions of exemplary programs, research and development efforts, and related information useful in developing more effective educational programs.

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The ERIC system has already made available—through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service—much informative data, including all federally funded research reports since 1956. However, if the findings of specific educational research are to be intelligible to teachers and applicable to teaching, considerable bodies of data must be reevaluated, focused, translated, and molded into an essentially different context. Rather than resting at the point of making research reports readily accessible, NIE has directed the separate ERIC Clearinghouses to commission from recognized authorities information analysis papers in specific areas.

In addition, as with all federal educational information efforts, ERIC has as one of its primary goals bridging the gap between educational theory and actual classroom practices. One method of achieving that goal is the development by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills (ERIC/RCS) of a series of sharply focused booklets based on concrete educational needs. Each booklet provides teachers with the best educational theory and/or research on a limited topic. It also presents descriptions of classroom activities which are related to the described theory and assists the teacher in putting this theory into practice.

This idea is not unique. Several educational journals and many commercial textbooks provide teachers with similar aids. The ERIC/RCS booklets are unusual in their sharp focus on an educational need and their blend of sound academic theory with tested classroom practices. And they have been developed because of the increasing requests from teachers to provide this kind of service.

Topics for these booklets are recommended by the ERIC/RCS National Advisory Committee. Suggestions for topics to be considered by the Committee should be directed to the Clearinghouse.

Bernard O'Donnell
Director, ERIC/RCS

Theory

"EVERY TEACHER A TEACHER OF READING" ran the headline banner promoting a recent inservice program for secondary teachers. Although the precise meaning of the slogan cannot be specified, the general message is becoming a very familiar one to secondary teachers, particularly, perhaps, to English teachers. Increasingly, English teachers and other secondary-school content teachers are being challenged to assume responsibility for developing their students' reading skills in their specific subject areas. The motivation for such requests comes from several sources. There is growing realization that the reading required in the various content areas differs, and it is generally recognized that the person best equipped to assist students in learning to read in each area is the specialist in that area—the content teacher. There is also growing awareness that accommodations must be made for the diverse reading abilities that exist in today's heterogeneously grouped classrooms. And there is growing recognition that even when good remedial reading programs are available—and they are certainly not routinely available—remediation requires the cooperation of all the student's teachers, not just the reading teacher, who sees the student for an hour each day or less.

For these reasons and others, all teachers are increasingly being asked to become "teachers of reading." But what specifically does this mean for English teachers? It is easier to say what it does not mean. It does not mean that English teachers should give up teaching English and become reading teachers, that the traditional concerns of language, literature, and composition or the newer concerns, such as those involved in Moffett's student-centered curriculum, should be discarded. Rather, in our belief at least, the injunction for English teachers to become "teachers of reading" means that English teachers must adopt strategies that facilitate students' growth in reading, that accommodate to students with varying reading abilities, and, at the same time, that enable teachers to continue to teach English.

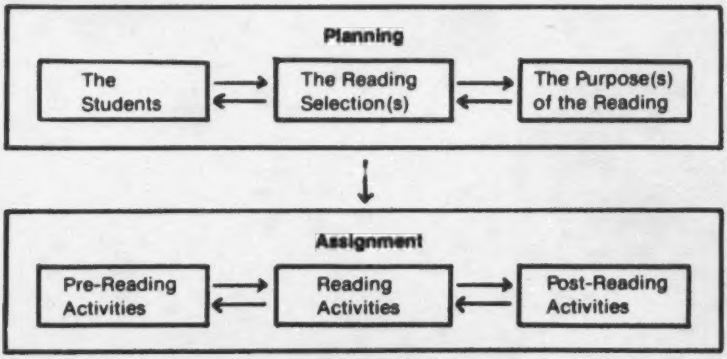
Outlined here is a rationale for one such strategy, a strategy for structuring reading activities. Several guiding principles inform this strategy. The first is from the work of Herber (1970), who stresses that success is crucial to learning. If students are to continue to play the game, to be learners, they must meet with success in the vast majority of the tasks they attempt.

The second guiding principle, advanced by Smith (1976) represents a qualification to the first one. Saying that students should meet with success does not mean that they should make no errors, for learning can take place only when errors are possible and feedback is given. If learners get only "well done" as feedback, little new information will be gained. But the errors must occur within definite limits; simply telling students "You totally missed the point" produces little learning. The learning situation must be such that errors are few and relatively specific.

The third guiding principle, again from the work of Herber (1970), is that an important task of schooling is that of gradually leading students from dependence on teachers to independence. Certainly, Herber notes, the ultimate goal of schooling is to produce independent learners and, in the specific case of reading, independent readers. But too often, he claims, teaching is assumptive; students are expected to accomplish new learning tasks without being taught how to do them. This, of course, if not teaching at all.

The fourth and last guiding principle comes from the work of Carroll and of Bloom. Carroll (1963) has put forth a notion of ability quite different from that traditionally held. Briefly, Carroll defines ability as the rate at which one learns, not in terms of whether or not one can learn. Bloom (1968), in his work on mastery learning, endorses this concept of ability and argues that the vast majority of students can learn the vast majority of things we wish to teach them—but at radically different rates. Ability, we would add, will vary markedly within most classes.

With these principles in mind, the strategy for structuring reading activities can be briefly outlined. The figure below illustrates both the factors considered in planning and the major components of an assignment.



Planning takes into account the students, the reading selection, and the purpose of reading. These factors are interrelated, and decisions made about any one factor constrain the decisions that can be made about the other two. If, for example, the decision is made that a certain selection must be dealt with, then the purposes of the assignment are limited to those to which the selection lends itself, and only certain students may be capable of reading the selection. If, on the other hand, the purpose of the assignment is to have the students read for enjoyment, then multiple selections will have to be used.

The result of planning is the creation of the activities themselves. As shown in the figure, the possible components of the assignment are pre-reading activities, reading activities, and post-reading activities. As is the case with the three factors considered in planning, the three components of the assignment are interdependent. If, for example, all students are to read a relatively difficult selection for homework, then at least some students in a heterogeneous class are likely to need a good deal of pre-reading instruction. If, on the other hand, the students are to read a relatively simple selection solely for enjoyment and if there is to be no post-reading task, then pre-reading activities may not be needed.

Below, we discuss various sorts of pre-reading, reading, and post-reading activities that may be used. Bear in mind that we are in no way suggesting that all of these activities ought to be part of all reading assignments for all students. In a heterogeneously grouped classroom, activities should be differentially assigned. Generally, more pre-reading activities and simpler post-reading tasks will need to be employed when a reading selection is difficult for a student or group of students. Then, too, the reading selections themselves need to be differentially assigned. Both good and poor readers should deal with some selections with which they need no help and others with which they need a good deal of help. The goal, as previously stated, is to *accommodate* to students' reading abilities and *facilitate* their success in reading while gradually leading them from dependence on the teacher to *independence*.

Pre-Reading Activities

Motivational Activities. There is little need to present a general rationale for the importance of motivation. As Dechant (1970) points out, psychologists have recognized the importance of motivation in learning at least since the time of Edward Thorndike. And teachers have always recognized the importance of motivating their students. Moreover, many of the activities throughout the "Practice" section of this booklet are concerned in one way or another with motivating students.

Here, however, we are referring to motivational activities of a particular sort, and we want to make a specific point about the value of such activities. As defined here, motivational activities are activities which are undertaken prior to reading and which are intended solely to get students interested in the upcoming reading. These activities do not necessarily bear a close relationship to the content of the reading selection and need not serve as overviews of the selection. The point we wish to make about motivational activities of this sort is this: sometimes, and perhaps frequently, doing something solely for the sake of motivating students is well worthwhile.

Preview Activities. Preview activities are distinguished from motivational activities in that they provide students with information directly related to the reading selection, that is, they inform readers about some of the content of the selection they are about to read. Previewing has been recommended by reading authorities at least since the work of Robinson (1941) and continues to be recommended by current authorities, including Thomas and Robinson (1972). A theoretical explanation of the value of previewing can be found in the description of the reading process put forth by Smith (1971). Smith views reading as an active process in which comprehension of what is read is dependent both on what is on the printed page and on what is in the reader's head as he or she approaches the reading. The reader, of course, approaches any reading with various sorts of knowledge and skills. What is at issue in previewing is the reader's knowledge of the content of a selection. Briefly stated, the more one knows about the content of a selection before reading it, the simpler the reading task will be.

Vocabulary Activities. Like previewing, preteaching potentially difficult vocabulary from a selection to be read is widely recommended by reading authorities (Cushenberry, 1972; Herber, 1970; Thomas and Robinson, 1972). Current theory of the reading process, exemplified at least in part by the work of Goodman (1970), LaBerge and Samuels (1974), and Smith (1971, 1976), lays great stress on the limits to cognitive and perceptual input and processing. According to these theorists, the active process of deriving meaning from sentences and longer units demands that readers process most low-level linguistic units—words in this case—without conscious attention. If readers are forced to ponder over many words, their cognitive capacity to input and process the meaning of sentences or longer units will be overloaded, and they will not be able to comprehend what they are reading. This does not mean, of course, that every word readers encounter must be thoroughly familiar to them. In fact, secondary students encounter more new words in their reading than we could possibly teach them. But it does mean that preteaching

difficult vocabulary can facilitate the reading process as students read a selection.

Pre-Questioning Activities. Providing readers with questions before they begin reading is another procedure that has been widely recommended by reading authorities (Burmeister, 1974; Herber, 1970; Thomas and Robinson, 1972). Theoretical support for posing pre-questions stems from the facts that acquiring new information demands attention and that we can attend to only a limited number of items of information at a time (Norman, 1969). Thus, if readers attempt to learn everything that is presented in a text, they face an extremely difficult, if not impossible, task. By restricting the information readers are looking for and thereby focusing their attention, we can greatly simplify the reading task. However, a word of caution is in order here. Rothkoph (1966) has found that pre-questions may serve to limit learning, particularly learning of information other than the answers to the questions asked. Thus, teachers should take care in asking pre-questions. If a selection is difficult for students and if one specific pre-question is all that they are likely to be able to answer, asking a single specific pre-question is appropriate. If a selection is not particularly difficult for students, pre-questions should be broad enough and sufficiently numerous that the students will attend to and learn from much of the selection.

Reading Activities

Guided Reading Activities. Guided reading refers to a procedure in which questions are inserted into a selection in such a way that readers are directed to stop and consider a question or several questions one or more times while they are reading. Frase (1967, 1968) and Rothkoph and Bisbicos (1967) have investigated various placement locations for questions inserted in a text and have found that interspersing several questions within a prose reading can enhance learning. Like pre-questions, questions inserted into the text serve to focus attention. The advantage of inserting questions at several points rather than placing all of them before the selection is that the reader need not remember a number of questions and look for as many answers at any one time.

Alternate Readings. Providing individual students or groups of students with alternate readings is certainly one of the best ways of insuring that each student will be successful. Providing students—particularly poor readers—with something they can do as opposed to something they can't is crucial (Aukerman, 1972; Fry, 1972; Thomas and Robinson, 1972). Alternate readings are thus appropriate when no method of structuring a reading assignment can make it appropriate for all students, and they are sometimes appropriate even

when some sort of structure could make a single selection appropriate for all students. As noted previously, the ultimate goal of reading instruction is independence in reading; if students are to become independent readers, they must get practice in reading without the teacher's guidance.

Modified Readings. When appropriate alternate readings are unavailable or when it is not desirable to have students read different selections, readings can sometimes be modified. The simplest possibility here is to have less able students read only parts of a selection. As previously noted, ability can be usefully thought of as the rate at which one learns (Carroll, 1963; Bloom, 1968). It therefore makes good sense to have less able readers read and learn less in a given amount of time than more able readers.

A much more time-consuming possibility is to modify the selection by simplifying syntax (Smith, 1972-73) and vocabulary (Marks, 1974), the two factors which weigh most heavily in readability formulas (Klare, 1963). A word of caution about such modifications is in order. The rewritten selection must be lucid English and appropriate for the linguistic maturity of the students. Otherwise, what appears to be a simpler version of a selection may actually be more difficult than the original.

Listening. Particularly for poor readers, listening is a distinctly easier task than reading. McNeil (1966) writes that by age four the child will have mastered very nearly the entire complex and abstract structure of the English language. While McNeil's statement regarding young children's linguistic development may be somewhat exaggerated, the fact is that every normal child learns to speak and listen relatively well before entering school (Gibson and Levin, 1975). Although some children certainly are better listeners than others, and although schools do not generally develop students' listening abilities to their fullest extent (Landry, 1971), nevertheless, there are not remedial listeners in the same sense that there are remedial readers. Tentative evidence suggests that for average students reading becomes a more effective channel than listening at about the seventh-grade level (Brown, 1971). Thus, for students reading below this level, listening represents a viable alternative for learning.

Post-Reading Activities

Post-Questioning Activities. Our discussion here is limited to consideration of objective post-questions of the multiple choice and true/false sort. Several factors which influence the difficulty of this type of questioning are worth considering. The first is the nature of the questions themselves. Taxonomies such as those of Barrett and Clymer (Clymer, 1968), Bloom (1968), and Herber (1970) suggest general orders of difficulty.

We have found the taxonomy developed by Barrett and Clymer to be especially useful in categorizing questions. The taxonomy specifies five major types of comprehension tasks: (1) literal comprehension, in which the student must either locate information explicitly stated in the text or produce facts from memory; (2) reorganization, which requires the student to analyze, synthesize, or organize information directly provided in the material; (3) inference, in which the student uses information in the text as a basis for conjecture; (4) evaluation, which requires that the student make a judgmental response to the work based on external criteria provided by the teacher, or on internal criteria provided by the reader's knowledge or values; and (5) appreciation, which calls for the student to react emotionally or aesthetically to the work. Difficulty generally increases from literal comprehension through evaluation. Appreciation is a different dimension and cannot be ranked in terms of difficulty.

The second factor which influences the difficulty of post-questioning activities is the number of questions asked. As previously noted, less able students learn at a slower rate than more able ones (Bloom, 1968; Carroll, 1963). It therefore makes good sense to ask poorer readers fewer questions than better readers. The third factor is the availability of answers to the questions. Students can be required to recall answers without using the text, or they can be allowed to return to the selection for answers. When students are allowed to return to the selection, they can be still further aided by being provided with the page, paragraph, or even line on which the answer occurs (Herber, 1970).

Discussion Activities. While objective questions are usually dealt with by students individually, discussions, of course, involve two or more students. Having students work together offers several potential advantages over having them work separately. Particularly for poor readers, those who may have read a selection without fully understanding it, discussion in a heterogeneous small group offers a convenient and relatively non-threatening setting in which the information not gained through reading can be acquired (Herber, 1970). For all students, discussion provides an opportunity for exchange and collaboration that may lead to higher order thinking and use of language (Moffett, 1968). Finally, particularly with small groups, discussion affords students an opportunity to deal with the parts or interpretations of a selection that are relevant to them rather than only with those matters the teacher considers relevant.

Writing Activities. Everything else being equal, writing is a more difficult task than having a discussion or answering objective questions. For this reason, special care needs to be taken in giving writing assignments, particularly to less able students. At the same

time, students' use of any language activity serves to reinforce their skill at others (Moffett, 1968), and integration of these various activities is a much sought after goal (Aulls, 1975; Rystrom, 1974).

Assuming that we want most students to write at least occasionally as a post-reading activity, the question of the difficulty of assignments becomes important. Although many factors influence writing difficulty, we are concerned here with the degree to which the writing depends on comprehension of the selection. At one end of this continuum are those writing assignments that demand thorough comprehension of the selection, for example, an explication of the symbolism in a poem. At the other end are those that rely largely on the reader's personal experience and use the story merely as a prompt to cue this experience, for example, a description of a personal incident similar to one that happened to a character in a short story. For readers who have not been able to fully understand a selection, the latter will, of course, be markedly easier.

Dramatic Activities. Included among dramatic activities is a range of performances extending from elaborate, theatrical, scripted presentations to very informal, creative, and improvisational dramatizations. For the most part, our concern here is with the less formal activities, which lend themselves very readily to affective goals such as engagement and involvement with a selection. They also provide opportunities for various sorts of cognitive growth (Koziol, 1973), and teachers should feel no need to apologize for such activities as being merely fun and games.

Two notes about the difficulty of dramatic activities deserve attention. First, as with writing activities, dramatic activities that rely heavily on full understanding of the text will prove more difficult for poor readers than will those that rely more on personal experience. Second, students must not be threatened by the task. The best safeguard is to move into drama slowly, being sure at all points that students are thoroughly comfortable with any sort of dramatization they are asked to perform in front of other students (Spolin, 1963).

The various sorts of pre-reading, reading, and post-reading activities discussed above are, of course, only some of the procedures that can be used with reading assignments. The list is in no way meant to be restrictive. Teachers certainly should and do use others. Moreover, the real world of teaching is more complex than our classification scheme may make it appear. Dramatic activities, for example, can frequently be used prior to a reading selection rather than after one.

Nevertheless, the scheme illustrates the range of activities that can be used to accommodate to students of varying abilities, and we have

followed it in presenting the specific suggestions which appear in the "Practice" section. While these activities are necessarily specific because we wish to present concrete examples, they are still intended as suggestions to be modified for various selections and for groups and individuals as the situation dictates. The goal, as we stated earlier, is to accommodate to students' abilities and facilitate their success in reading while gradually leading them toward independence.

Practice

Pre-Reading

Motivational Activities

Creating Myth. The activity which follows is designed specifically as an introduction to the myth of Prometheus. The general structure of the exercise, however, may be adapted for use with a variety of works, both fiction and nonfiction. First, any myth or folktale which explains some natural or human phenomenon, such as "Pandora's Box" or "Pluto and Persephone," is suitable. Second, it is possible to use science fiction with this type of activity, particularly that which is distinctly speculative. Many of Bradbury's stories are of this sort. Finally, nonfictional material which attempts to explore the implications of new social or scientific developments may be appropriate. An example is Toffler's *Future Shock*.

This exercise may be used in isolation or as a component of a unit on myth. The activity is intended for a group. Since the final products of each group project are creative and may be presented in a variety of ways, heterogeneous grouping may be particularly effective.

First, discuss with the students various discoveries or inventions which have contributed to civilization, such as the wheel, fire, and the bow and arrow. Next, divide the students into groups and ask them to select an early discovery and make up a story about how it was discovered. Emphasize that this is an exercise in fantasy, not in scientific method. These stories or myths—even the discoveries themselves—may be entirely imaginary. Upon completion of the exercise, each group must make some kind of presentation, which may take a variety of forms: a group writing project, a dramatic presentation, a series of drawings, a "you are there" journalistic piece, and so on.

Following the presentation, ask the same groups to speculate about what the world would look like had their particular discovery *not* been made. Have them construct a scenario, focusing perhaps on one family or one individual and tracing the various repercussions of

the absence of the discovery, invention, or event. Have the groups present these scenarios in whatever manner they choose.

An alternative to either of the above exercises might be to ask students to investigate the potential for good or evil in their mythological stories. This may involve tracing—in hypothetical terms—the development of a device such as the bow and arrow—for example, the bow and arrow led to the crossbow, catapult, cannon, bomb, and, ultimately, the missile.

The Great All-American Cross Country Motorcycle Run. This activity is designed to precede a reading of the "Prologue" to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.* Various versions of the "Prologue" are available and can be used to accommodate to students of varying ability. In addition, the activity lends itself well to use with such works as *Huckleberry Finn, Gulliver's Travels,* Samuel Johnson's "A Journey by Stagecoach," and some of Edward Arlington Robinson's character sketches.

Beforehand, collect brightly colored magazine pictures of odd, interesting-looking people of all ages. Each picture should contain only one person. Explain to the students that they will be reading about a pilgrimage from London to Canterbury made by a group of people back in the fourteenth century. Before the students begin the actual reading, however, they will construct their own imaginary, present-day trek from beautiful, downtown Burblink, California, to the wild Chatahoochie River in Tennessee. The government plans to dam the river early next year, destroying much of its primitive beauty. The participants in the run, who must travel by motorcycle, want to see the river one last time before it is tamed. Other cyclists will be picked up at various points along the way.

Divide the class into groups and give each group one or two pictures. Explain that each of the persons pictured is a participant in the Great All-American Cross Country Motorcycle Run. Each group must give a name to the participant whose picture they have and fill out an entry blank for the trip. The entry blank can be made up by the students and should include such items as age, sex, marital status, number of children, hometown, weight, hobbies, occupation, religion, insurance company, state of health, and reason for joining the trek. After students have the entry blank filled out, they should fit all of the information into a short prose description which one member of each group will read aloud to the class.

After the descriptions have been read to the class, solicit students' ideas on such matters as the kinds of problems the travelers would encounter, how they would entertain themselves along the way, and which travelers would get along and which would not.

Preview Activities

Emily Grierson's Secret. This activity is intended to be used before reading Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily." The story is rather difficult, but high school students will be better prepared to deal with its subtleties after completing this exercise. Although the specific clues listed in this activity pertain only to Faulkner's story, the general approach can be used with any mystery story.

First, explain to the students that they will be reading a mystery story. Before reading it, however, they will be given clues, one per day, which will help them solve the mystery. Prior to revealing the first clue, give each student a sheet containing the following information as background:

> The story concerns a Miss Emily Grierson, an elderly spinster, surrounded by mystery. The upstairs bedroom in Miss Emily's house has been shut off for about thirty years. When Miss Emily's father died thirty years ago, she refused to believe he was dead and wouldn't let his body be buried for three days. A certain Homer Barron courted Miss Emily shortly after her father's death, but he seemed unwilling to marry her.

Tell the students that they may collaborate on the solution of the mystery and that they will receive a new clue on each of five days, beginning with that day.

Clues might be distributed at the beginning of each day's class and put aside until the fifth day, when the final clue is revealed. Although the preview takes place over a five-day span, no class time is spent on discussion of the clues or the solution of the mystery until the final day. Clues, in their proper order, are as follows:

1. During the time she was being courted by Homer Barron, Miss Emily bought some arsenic at a local drugstore.
2. Shortly after buying the arsenic, Miss Emily purchased a man's toilet kit and men's clothing.
3. Homer Barron left town soon afterwards. It was thought that he would send for Miss Emily later.
4. Three days later, Barron returned, entered Miss Emily's house, and was never seen again.
5. Some time later, neighbors complained of a bad smell coming from Miss Emily's house.

On the fifth day, after distributing the final clue, tell the students that it is now thirty years later. Emily Grierson has just died, and some of the townspeople are about to enter her house. When they do, they will have to open all rooms in order to collect Miss Emily's personal effects. What will they find?

Responses to this question may be of several types. You may want students to discuss the mystery in groups, coming together as a class afterwards. Individual paragraphs may be submitted and discussed, or a general class discussion may ensue. In any case, stress that students should account for every clue given them as they try to solve the mystery.

Following the discussion or writing exercises, assign "A Rose for Emily." Emphasize that Faulkner's story and climax may differ from the students' reconstructions. Hopefully, students will be eager to discover how the story turns out and to compare its conclusion to their own.

Play It as It's Written. In this game, the teacher leads the class through an experience similar to one which they will read about later. Though "Play It as It's Written" is specifically intended for Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery," it can easily be modified for such stories as "The Census Takers" by Frederick Pohl and "The Tunnel Ahead" by Alice Glaser, both of which present random assassination as a solution for dealing with the overpopulation problem. More generally, any story or poem which includes a crucial event that can be modified for enactment in class can be used.

To prepare for this activity, construct a lottery box (a shoe box will work fine) and lottery ballots (several slips of blank paper). Before beginning, explain that there will be a drawing today. Do not answer any questions students ask concerning the drawing. Be evasive and keep the proceedings as businesslike as possible. Divide the students into heterogeneous groups. Each group should give themselves a "family" name and pick a leader. Each leader must write his or her family name on a slip of paper and drop it in the lottery box. Mix up the slips of paper and then draw one from the box. The leader of the chosen group must write down the names of each family member on a separate slip of paper and drop them all in the box. One name is then drawn from the box. After announcing the name, inform the entire class that the school board has decided that teachers are giving too many A's and not enough F's. Therefore, from now on every class must give at least one F each day, and the information must be turned into the office daily. Since there was not a quiz or test scheduled for today's class, a drawing seemed the best way to assign the F. The person drawn gets today's F.

Upon hearing this information, several students will undoubtedly have arguments against this plan. Discussion questions might include the following: Is this a good precedent (asking for a certain number of F's) to set in the school? How did you feel while the drawing was going on? Did you want to be picked? How did you feel

after the reason for the drawing was announced? Does the person picked have stronger feelings than the others? Finally, before students lose interest in the subject, relate this activity to their imminent reading of "The Lottery." Advise them to look for similarities and differences between the drawing held in class and that in the story.

The Coming Attraction. The activity below is probably one that many teachers already use quite frequently. Put simply, the teacher gives a brief synopsis of the plot and introduces the characters and the setting. This sort of previewing is a familiar procedure outside as well as inside the classroom. The success of film and television previews and of such magazines as *TV Guide* strongly suggests that one can give away a good deal about an upcoming selection without ruining it for the reader. With relatively short works, short stories or short novels such as *The Red Badge of Courage* or *Old Yeller*, previews of this sort can be quite brief. With longer or more complex works, such as *Great Expectations* or *Silas Marner*, these sorts of previews will be longer. Here we present a sample preview for a relatively long short story, "Leiningen and the Ants."

> Some of you have probably read or heard something about the vicious killer bees which have been frightening natives of South America. We're going to be reading about another South American menace, armies of flesh-eating ants. These ants plunder the countryside, devouring all vegetation and wildlife they find in their path. In a matter of minutes after their attack, only bare bones and dead earth are left.
>
> In the story you're about to read, one plantation owner, Leiningen, decides he can outwit the marauding ants and stop their seemingly inevitable onslaught. Leiningen has prepared for some time for the arrival of just such a terror. His plantation is entirely surrounded by water. Leiningen has ordered that all trees on both sides of the water barrier be cut down. Most of the people on his plantation are removed to remoter ground. Everything seems to be tipped in Leiningen's favor. Then Leiningen receives word that the ants are closing in on the tiny, water-surrounded enclosure. Leiningen immediately rides out to take a firsthand look at his enemy. In the distance is a giant, black, crawling mass moving slowly and steadily toward the island sanctuary. For one day and a night Leiningen and his workers heroically keep the ants at bay. But on the afternoon of the second day, the ants break through and begin to cross the channel toward the helpless defenders. Find out how the ants were able to make the crossing and what happened to the defenders when you read "Leiningen and the Ants."

Vocabulary Activities

An Elizabethan Dictionary. Most high school students are required at one time or another to read a Shakespearean drama. In

addition to the general complexity that faces students in a play such as *Macbeth* or *Julius Caesar*, vocabulary, particularly archaic words and phrases, presents specific problems. Since any lengthy work with difficult vocabulary is likely to contain many more difficult words than can reasonably be pretaught, constructing a glossary that students can refer to while reading makes good sense. Students can aid in this endeavor the first time around. Later the dictionary can be used for other classes, or other classes may repeat the activity.

First, make sure that there are sufficient dictionaries available and that the range in sophistication is such that some will be appropriate for students looking up relatively common words and others will be appropriate for those searching for difficult and archaic vocabulary. Divide the class into heterogeneous groups and have the members of each group skim through the play picking words and phrases they don't understand. Stress that since the dictionary is for the entire class, words that might cause difficulty for any student should be included. The teacher should be available to act as a consultant, particularly to explain phrases, throughout the exercise. One member of each group with readable handwriting should act as recorder. Have each group alphabetize their words, define them, and put them on a ditto master so that everyone can have a copy. While this activity is quite time-consuming, it is well worthwhile in situations where the alternative is to have many students continually stymied by the words they meet. Moreover, the vocabulary search will constitute somewhat of a preview of the work.

The same technique can be used on shorter works by having students skim the selection, again looking for hard words and phrases. This time the groups can all work on the same material. When each group is finished picking and defining, get everyone back together again and compare definitions and words chosen, making a dittoed composite list after the discussion.

Relating and Categorizing. This activity is intended to facilitate the reading of an article in *Time* magazine's bicentennial issue. The article for which the exercise was specifically designed is "Not All Are Created Equal," a short piece discussing the issue of slavery at the time of the American Revolution. The technique described below may be used for vocabulary encountered in a variety of nonfiction works which provide background information or present supplementary viewpoints on literary themes.

Not all difficult or infrequent words in the article are dealt with. Rather, those selected have a fairly close relationship to the concept of seminal interest in the article—slavery.

Tell the students that they will be reading an article about slavery in the United States at the time of the American Revolution. Explain

that the article is a "you are there" piece, written as if the events reported had just occurred.

Next, elicit from the students words and phrases which slavery brings to mind (What does "slavery" mean? What feelings does the word evoke? Where did the slaves come from?). Students should construct rough lists of the words and phrases elicited for each concept, as shown below:

Vocabulary	*Concept*
freedman, bondage, importation, enslavement uprising, abolishing	slavery

Finally, give the students sentences from the article which contain words related to the concept. Many of the words will have already appeared in the students' list. As a class, try to arrive at a general definition for each word. While defining the words, ask questions requiring students to relate them to slavery (Which words are synonymous with slavery? Order the words to reflect the history of slavery in this country.).

After the words have been defined and categorized in these contextual and thematic terms, distribute the article. Students should be competent with the new words, since the words have been dealt with in two contexts—in the actual sentences which contain them and in relation to the central concept of the article.

Pre-Questioning Activities

Better than Nothing. As we noted in the "Theory" section, posing specific questions before the reading may result in some students doing little more than looking up the answers to the questions. Nevertheless, if it's a choice between students being able to get nothing from a selection, thus feeling failure and frustration, and being at least successful in answering a few questions, the latter is certainly to be preferred. The ten questions which follow are for Poe's "The Black Cat." Some questions may be appropriate whenever there is a vast discrepancy between the difficulty of the selection and the reading ability of the students. Because a selection that is inordinately difficult for the whole of a class will probably not be used, this activity would normally be one for a small group. The sample questions presented below are of two types—multiple choice and short answer.

1. In earlier years, the narrator (a) loved all animals, (b) hated cats, (c) never had pets, or (d) loved only cats.
2. One of the reasons the narrator began to mistreat his animals was that (a) they ran away from home a lot, (b) they ate more food than he could afford to buy, (c) he was jealous of the way they loved his wife, or (d) he began drinking and became unreasonable.

3. What terrible thing does the narrator do to Pluto first?
4. Finally, the narrator (a) makes friends with Pluto, (b) hangs Pluto, (c) gives Pluto away to some friends, or (d) ignores Pluto.
5. After his house burns down, the narrator sees something on the remaining wall. What is it?
6. Later, the narrator finds another black cat. How does he feel about the new cat?
7. After finding the new cat, the narrator is frightened by (a) a nightmare about Pluto, (b) a burglar who comes to his house, (c) an image of the gallows which appears on the cat, or (d) a vision in which his parents appear.
8. What does the narrator do when his wife tries to stop him from killing the cat?
9. How does the narrator hide the evidence of his crime?
10. The police discover what the narrator did (a) when he confesses, (b) when they hear the cat howling, (c) when a neighbor tells them what he did, or (d) when they find his fingerprints on the axe.

Where Do I Begin? While it is sometimes necessary to give specific questions prior to reading, general questions are more frequently appropriate. Assuming generally competent readers and a selection that is nevertheless difficult, questions given before reading can guide students toward getting the overall meaning of the reading. Below are examples of general, guiding questions.

"The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock" is a difficult poem, even for advanced readers. You will want to have students focus on the overall tone of the poem. One way to do this is to get them to relate Eliot's feelings to their own. The following question could be posed prior to reading:

> J. Alfred Prufrock is not satisfied with his life. How would you feel if your life was as J. Alfred described it?

This question will lead readers to first make inferences about the author's presentation of what Prufrock's life was like and to then decide if they, too, would be dissatisfied with it. The answer to the question must be found in thoughtful consideration of the whole of the poem and not just in searching in one line or stanza.

Dylan Thomas's poem, "Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night," is a metaphorical treatment of death. Letting students know this before they begin will aid their reading. A good question might be the one below:

> The author feels that one should not just gently accept death. Note the advice he gives to wise men, good men, wild men, grave men, and finally, his father. Do you agree with his advice?

Here students will be pressed to think about whether they agree or disagree with the poet as they read.

In Steinbeck's short story, "Molly Morgan," students will encounter several shifts from past to present. A good pre-question can prepare them for such shifts:

> How do flashbacks in the story relate to Molly's present demeanor and actions?

This question will call for the students to be aware of time changes in the story.

Reading

Guided Reading Activities

I Predict. This activity requires readers to engage in a special sort of previewing, the previewing of later parts of a selection that is afforded by reading the earlier parts. Stories which gradually provide the reader with clues which forecast what is to come are appropriate here. Camus' "The Guest," Harte's "The Outcasts of Poker Flat," London's "To Build a Fire," and Thurber's "The Catbird Seat" all provide information of this type. We have used the activity in conjunction with Beatrice Chute's story, "Mr. Bodley's Oak." The story centers on two characters: Mr. Summerfield, who wants an old oak tree chopped down to make room for a new highway, and Mr. Bodley, who wants to save the tree for sentimental reasons.

Before you have the students read the story, take a moment to explain the importance of interacting with the printed page while reading. Advise the students that it is a good idea to ask themselves such questions as "Do I agree with this character?" "What will this character do next?" and "How will the story end?" as they read. To give them practice at this, give them some questions to answer as they read "Mr. Bodley's Oak." Put the questions on the board and instruct students about where they should stop to answer them. The first stopping point should be near the beginning of the story after the words, "Allowing for delays, the tree should be felled by noon and in the process of being hacked up." The question could be, "Do you think the tree will be chopped down?" The second point should come near the end of the story after the line, "Hey! Hey, mister! We're back," with the question, "Will Mr. Bodley or Mr. Summerfield get his way? Why do you think so?"

Have all the students pause at each stopping point and discuss what facts or inferences led them to make their decisions. Go back with them and discuss those aspects of the story that bear on the question. After students complete the story, discuss the whole of the prediction process.

Indexed Questions. In the two previous activities, we suggested

presenting students with questions before they read. This certainly helps to focus attention. But for some students reading some selections, more help will be needed. The suggestion here is to index the questions, giving students the page, paragraph, and perhaps even the line on which the answers can be found. Of course, this procedure should not be overused, but when a selection is particularly difficult and a number of questions are asked, it makes good sense.

The questions in this example are designed for use with "The Program." This twelve-page story is an excerpt from Arthur C. Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. It appears in *Man the Myth-Maker*, an anthology in the series, *Literature: Uses of the Imagination* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973).

"The Program" is set in the Pleistocene Age, when early humans had begun to distinguish themselves from other primates. It is a science-fiction explanation of how humanity was "guided" by other superior, extraterrestrial beings. The central character is Moon-Watcher, a "man-ape" chosen by these beings to be the key recipient of their instruction.

The six questions below include both literal and inferential items that require short answers. As an example, the excerpt in which the answer is given is provided with the first question. All of the questions are followed by the page and paragraph numbers (as found in *Man the Myth-Maker*) where the answers can be found.

1. Where does Moon-Watcher's tribe live? (page 57, paragraph 3: "When the first faint glow of dawn crept into the cave, Moon-Watcher saw that his father had died in the night. He did not know that the Old One was his father, for such a relation was utterly beyond his understanding, but as he looked at the emaciated body he felt a dim disquiet that was the ancestor of sadness.")
2. Who are the Others? (page 59, paragraph 3)
3. What is Moon-Watcher's diet? (page 59, paragraph 5)
4. What happens to change the lives of Moon-Watcher and his tribe? (page 65, paragraph 1)
5. Who placed the slab? What kind of beings are they? (page 67, paragraph 5)
6. How does Moon-Watcher's tribe apply the knowledge it has gained? (page 69, paragraph 1)

Alternate Readings

Different Versions, Same Story. Students are not all the same. Not all students within a class need read the same version of a story. The approach suggested here is sometimes feasible when a teacher assigns one work to a heterogeneous class. It may be possible in such situations to give different students alternate versions to help ensure that all students can complete the reading required.

One source of alternate readings may be found in high interest-easy reading materials. The volume of such works is increasing rapidly. Materials have been developed, both fiction and non-fiction, which contain a simpler vocabulary than most secondary reading matter but which attempt to maintain an interest level and format appealing to secondary students.

The Pacemaker Classics series, published by Fearon, contains potential alternate readings. Books in this series are adaptations of popular literary works. Vocabulary in the adaptations has been assessed at the third-grade level. The series contains *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Moonstone*, *The Jungle Book*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *Treasure Island*, and *Two Years before the Mast*. These books are in paperback and are between seventy-five and one hundred pages in length. Print is not inordinately large, and central aspects of plot and theme remain unchanged from the original. In addition to revising the vocabulary, the publishers have altered some elements of style and structure. The Pacemaker Classics version of *Robinson Crusoe*, for example, has been rewritten in the more familiar first-person-narrative style rather than as a diary.

Books such as these enable the teacher to assign the same work to an entire class and, at the same time, to accommodate to the needs of all students. Class discussions and dramatic activities are facilitated, since one can be reasonably sure that most students have understood and appreciated the work.

Different Students, Different Stories. In addition to accommodating to individual differences by providing the *same* selection at different reading levels, teachers can also provide *different* selections at different levels, with the different selections related in some way, perhaps thematically or categorically. Any of the short units typically devised for use in the classroom—death, the environment, love, fear; men and women versus nature, people under pressure, a search for self-identity; modern poets, British writers, modern short stories, mythological tales—can be readily accommodated to the varied reading abilities found in most classrooms, if the teacher is mindful of such differences. Before assigning material, the teacher must know both the approximate reading level of each student and the approximate reading level of the material. Knowledge of a student's ability can be gained from general observation and reading test scores, while knowledge of a selection's difficulty can be obtained by using a readability formula and by considering the length and complexity of the story. Thus, when a unit is being organized, variability of reading levels can be as important as variability of genre and type.

In a unit on humor, for instance, stories by Thurber, Twain, and O. Henry will usually serve for less able or less mature readers. More advanced students might tackle Heller, Kesey, and Vonnegut. But teachers need not always assign students to a story—many times students can be given a choice.

Modified Readings

Simplify, Simplify. It's not always possible to locate different versions of the same work, nor is it always desirable to have different students reading different stories. An alternative to that strategy calls for the story to be modified by the teacher. This procedure, though time-consuming, can be an effective means for presenting a single piece of prose to a heterogeneous class.

The passage below consists of the first two sentences of Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher":

> During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing along, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country, and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was—but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit.

Our modified version of the same two sentences follows:

> It was a dull, dark, still day in the autumn of the year. The clouds hung low and heavy in the sky. I had been passing along, on horseback, through a particularly dreary stretch of country. As the shadows of evening drew on, I found myself near the gloomy House of Usher. Somehow, my first view of the building filled me with unbearable sadness.

The first passage measures at roughly the twelfth-grade level, the second, at the seventh-grade level, according to the Fry Readability Formula. Making modifications requires a good deal of teacher judgment regarding what changes should be made and how extensive they should be. In this case, our major attempt was to simplify the extremely long and complex first sentence, without resorting to primer-like subject-verb-object sentences, and to replace difficult words with easier synonyms, near synonyms, or phrases.

Listening Activity

A Day at the Late Night Movie. Listening is distinctly easier than reading, at least for less able readers. In the following listening activity the teacher or another good reader makes a tape of part of a

suspense story for presentation to the class. Stories by Poe and Hawthorne are extremely appropriate for this activity; "The Pit and the Pendulum" or "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" are two which students usually enjoy and which serve especially well.

First, attempt to set up an eerie atmosphere by pushing desks off to one side, dousing the lights, and pulling the shades. When students come in, have them sit close together in a circle on the floor. (If possible, pass around bowls of popcorn to create more of a movie-time feeling.) The tape recorder and a small lamp or candle should be in the center of the circle. Tell the students that the first part of the story has been taped and that they can either read the remaining portion silently or listen to you complete it aloud. For "The Pit and the Pendulum," a good stopping point is the line, "But what had mainly disturbed me was the idea that it [the pendulum] had perceptibly *descended*." For "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," the tape could end with the line, "Even while quaffing the third draft of the Fountain of Youth, they were almost awed by the expression of his mysterious visage." When the tape is finished, turn on the lights. Ask the students who wish to complete the reading silently to return to their desks to read, and read the rest of the story to the remaining group orally.

Post-Reading

Post-Questioning Activities

What's Your Question? In this activity, the teacher assigns post-questions to students based on the teacher's knowledge of their individual needs. When dealing with a single work in a heterogeneous class, it is not always feasible to require all students to answer the same questions following reading. The intention here is to provide each student with questions that she or he will be able to answer.

The taxonomy developed by Barrett and Clymer (Clymer, 1968) and described in the "Theory" section may be used in two ways. First, the teacher may differentially assign individual students the five types of questions—literal comprehension, reorganization, inferential comprehension, evaluation, and appreciation—depending on their ability. For example, following the reading of Frost's "The Death of the Hired Man," the teacher distributes questions to the class, one or two to each student. In general poor readers receive literal questions and good readers receive more difficult ones. Sometimes, however, good readers should receive literal questions, and poor readers should be assigned inferential or judgmental questions. It is also appropriate to give both good and poor readers

appreciation questions. A second way in which the taxonomy may be used would be for the teacher to provide several questions of each type and allow students to choose their own questions following reading.

Listed below are six sample questions for use with "The Death of the Hired Man." These may be employed in either of the two ways mentioned above.

Literal Comprehension—Recognition
In lines 31 and 32 of the poem, compare Mary's and Warren's attitude about having Silas overhear their conversation.

Literal Comprehension—Recall
How is Mary's treatment of Silas different from Warren's?

Reorganization
Summarize Mary's feelings about Silas. Summarize Warren's feelings about Silas. How are they alike? How are they different?

Inference
Compare ways in which Mary's and Warren's different treatments of an old person are like society's attitudes.

Evaluation
Was Warren right or wrong in feeling about Silas the way he did? Why or why not?

Appreciation
Do you like the way the author uses words to create vivid images? Give some examples of images you particularly like.

Discussion Activities

Survival Suitcase. A variety of topics are, of course, appropriate for discussion. The following activity serves as a means of getting students to think about the nature of survival after having read material in which characters must confront the possibility of destruction by the environment. The exercise can easily be adapted for use with various fictional works dealing with the theme of survival—for example, Buck's *The Good Earth*, Cather's *My Antonia*, Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, and Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. In addition, nonfiction materials such as newspaper accounts, autobiographies, biographies, and social studies texts provide situations in which people face survival situations.

Here the post-reading discussion activity follows reading of Captain Eddie Rickenbacker's autobiographical sketch, "Seven Came Through," which is about surviving on rafts in the Pacific. After students have read Rickenbacker's account, divide the class into small, heterogeneous groups. Tell each group that they must make a list of items that would have helped the ocean survivors. Advise that they list as many articles as they can, perhaps ten to fifteen. The various lists might include such items as the following: hat, first-aid kit, revolver, oranges, Bible, flare, map, hook.

After students have drawn up their lists, tell them that *only* five items can fit into the survival suitcase and that everyone in each group must agree on which five items will be included and which will be sacrificed. To support the inclusion of any item, students should create arguments based on the story or on their experience.

This activity should provide a good review of details in the story, because students will often have to go back to find reasons for including an item. It should also stimulate students to think further about which things have a higher value when survival is at stake. This activity can also be used to introduce subsequent materials on the theme of survival in other, different environments. Students can then compare items which are essential for survival in all environments and those which are needed only in certain types of environments.

Both Sides Now. Debate is quite flexible in that it may be used with a variety of reading materials, both fiction and nonfiction. Virtually any story, play, poem, or essay which deals with a controversial subject will lend itself to an exercise of this type. Problems to be discussed range from a character's action in a story or play, as in Sophocles' *Antigone* or *Oedipus*, or Steinbeck's George in *Of Mice and Men*, to topics of social interest, as in Gloria Steinem's essay, "A New Egalitarian Life Style," or Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" speech.

The purpose of debate is to involve as many students as possible in a direct and active confrontation with the questions presented in the reading. With a large class, it would be impossible to have all of the students participate in the debate itself. In this situation it would be feasible to select four or five students to debate each side of the question and to employ the remaining students as judges.

After assigning a reading of King's speech, tell students that they will be debating the statement, "Black Americans have reached the dream of equality envisioned by Dr. King in 1963." Divide students into pro and con groups and decide who will be the judges of the debate. When the students have completed the reading, give them time to discuss their position in their respective groups.

Debate proceeds with a member of each side speaking in turn. Time limits may be imposed by the judges, or the question may be argued until the judges decide that both sides have covered their points. It is then up to the judges to decide which side presented the most persuasive argument. Following the debate, a full-class discussion, in which both King's speech and the debate are analyzed, may ensue.

Writing Activities

What We'll Remember. Short character sketches represent a relatively easy and straightforward writing activity that may follow a literary work. Providing a definite structure for character sketches can make such writing particularly easy. Following are two possible structures for writing brief character sketches of Granny Weatherall, the central character in Katherine Ann Porter's short story, "The Jilting of Granny Weatherall."

After students read the story, ask them to condense Granny Weatherall's life and write an obituary which makes note of the high points. Have a sample of obituaries from newspapers and magazines on hand for students to look at. Students can write the obituary in any form they choose. However, you might want to provide a form such as the following, which students can use if they like:

Granny Weatherall, age 80, died yesterday from . . .
She is survived by . . .
She was a member of . . .
She will be mourned by . . . because . . .
She will be remembered for . . .
She always wanted, but she never got to . . .
In life she regretted . . .
The body will be . . .
Flowers may be sent . . .
In lieu of flowers . . .

An additional or alternate exercise is writing an epitaph that appropriately describes Granny Weatherall. Students could be encouraged to draw ideas from *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, songs, inspirational writing, or Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*. One possible epitaph describing Granny Weatherall follows:

Here lies Granny Weatherall
whose life was shared by those she loved
and . . .
by those who refused to love her.

What's Your Impression? This activity is designed as a means of responding to poetry. It is intended to involve all students by soliciting their written reactions. As we indicated in the "Theory" section, writing activities often require that the students have a fairly thorough understanding of a work, a greater degree of comprehension, perhaps, than is necessary for some other post-reading exercises. Comprehension demands can be lessened, however, by allowing students to deal with a poem on any level they may choose, whether it be a critical appraisal or a recording of sensory/emotional

responses to the subject or language. Although all poetry is amenable to this type of exercise, it might be best to begin with a poem in which the language is relatively concrete. Much of the work of Langston Hughes and Erica Jong and some of that of Kenneth Fearing, Robert Frost, and Walt Whitman falls into this category.

For an assignment of Jong's "Alcestis on the Poetry Circuit," for instance, have the students read the poem once, perhaps after listening to you read it aloud. Ask them to write whatever impressions they have on the poem itself, or that were generated by it. Virtually every kind of reaction is acceptable. Students should write, without stopping and without concern for grammar, spelling, or punctuation, for five minutes. Following this, ask them to reread the poem and write again, non-stop, for five more minutes, making additional comments or expanding their previous thoughts.

After the exercise, you may wish to discuss the different perspectives presented in the students' writing, in groups or as a class. Or the exercises may be further expanded and synthesized into student essays or poems. If this type of exercise is employed regularly, it is possible to have students compile a "response journal," in which their impressions of different works are recorded. In this way, students may see for themselves the ways in which they react to material read in class and how the form and content of these reactions can change over time.

Dramatic Activities

All the World's a Stage. This activity is intended to involve students actively in the narration of a story. In it students mime the events described while narrators read the story. As with many dramatic interpretations of literature, this activity requires more preparation by students than discussion or discussion-related exercises. Additionally, it may be necessary for the students to have had some experience in creative dramatics, although this is not an absolute prerequisite.

Literary works which can be interpreted fairly literally lend themselves particularly well to this form of dramatic activity. Some possible works are Holmes' "The Deacon's Masterpiece, or The Wonderful 'One-Hoss Shay,'" Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart," Monro's "The Open Window" or an excerpt from Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* or Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*. Here we've used Thurber's "The Day the Dam Broke." The story has enough characters to allow all students in a class to participate. It concerns a panic, caused by an unfounded mass impression that the town dam has broken, which results in a chaotic exodus through the streets of the town by the hysterical citizens.

After the students have read the story, ask them to decide which characters they would like to portray. When roles have been assigned, reread the story, having students thoroughly familiarize themselves with the sequence of events and their characters' movements. In order to facilitate this process, prepare an outlined "script," perhaps organizing it into different scenes, such as High Street, the movie theater, and so on. Finally, select two or three students who read well orally to act as narrators.

The procedure is, quite simply, to have students recreate the events in pantomime, as the narrator reads the story. Depending upon time and interest, you might want to videotape the production.

You Are There. In this activity, students dramatize a historical event presented in literature, using a news broadcast format. There are two particular advantages to an activity of this type. First, it provides students with an enriched perspective from which they may view a work and an entertaining context for dealing with issues raised in the reading. Second, it involves the class in a group learning process, thereby facilitating comprehension of the work by all students.

The Diary of Anne Frank is one work which lends itself to this kind of activity. Students select part of the book to serve as the focus for their dramatization, perhaps that part which describes the capture of Anne and her family by the Nazi SS. Discuss the format for the dramatization and ask students to choose their roles for the production. Those who wish to be characters from the story itself should study their characters and develop an idea as to how to portray them. Students serving as members of the broadcast team can decide the procedure which the news show will follow—who should be interviewed, what background information to report, whether editorial commentary should be included, and so on. The news staff also directs the proceedings, telling the characters what their movements will be during the broadcast.

Depending upon the amount of experience the class has had with dramatic activities and the time available for the production, the action can be either spontaneous and improvised or fully scripted and choreographed. The broadcast can be videotaped and may serve as an introduction to *The Diary of Anne Frank* for other groups.

The "you are there" activity can be used with fictional works, as well as historical accounts. Richard Wright's *Native Son*, Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery," and Rod Serling's "The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street" are some possibilities.

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